



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Internal Services Department

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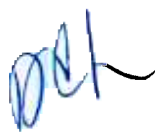


Dave Lambertson
Interim Director

To enrich lives through effective and caring service.

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August 25, 2004

To: Each Supervisor
From: Dave Lambertson 
Interim Director
Subject: **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES**

This memo is to update you on **some** important information technology related initiatives that ISD will be pursuing during **fiscal** year 2004-05.

Data Mirroring to an Alternate Data Center

As departments rely more and more on their computer systems, the impact of extensive system downtime is a real threat to essential County operations. However, major changes in technology now make it possible for information being stored and updated at one location to be simultaneously duplicated at a remote (Alternate Data Center) location. The technology is referred to as data mirroring and is considered to be the best practice in terms of disaster recovery.

To accomplish data mirroring:

- An alternate data center **site** must be identified
- The applicable redundant hardware must be acquired. The latest disk hardware has the capability built in to do remote mirroring.
- The County network **needs to** be extended to provide a high-speed connection to the Alternate Data Center.

Because of data mirroring technology, it is possible to resume full operation of computer applications at the Alternate Data Center in a very short time if something happens to the primary data center. In some cases, there would be no downtime at all.

ISD's FY 2004-05 budget includes equipment required for data mirroring for the IBM mainframe-based systems and other server based applications where departments want the back up service. The applications include, Property Tax, Criminal Justice (Sheriff, Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender and the Superior Court), Mental Health, the County's Payroll and Personnel system and many others.

During September 2004 ISD will submit a Board letter requesting approval to buy the data mirroring equipment (i.e., because it has a unit cost greater than \$250,000) and other budgeted equipment. We are determining a suitable alternate data center site to host the remote equipment. I anticipate we will complete this task by the end of December 2004.

Data mirroring does not eliminate the need to obtain a modern, resilient County Data Center. However, it will provide for much quicker recovery time than we currently anticipate in the event of a disaster.

Electronic Billing Analysis Tool (eBAT) Implementation

eBAT is a telephone billing system developed by SBC with the County/ISD being a major contributor to the system's features and functions. The batch portion of the eBAT system was implemented in December 2003. County departments' telephone coordinators are currently being trained on how to utilize the online portion (web access to billing information). As this occurs, paper bills are no longer being generated. Thus far nearly seventy five percent of the printing has been eliminated.

During the course of this fiscal year, training is planned for County managers so that they can easily track the utilization of telephones within their respective areas. We are expecting to realize savings as a result by managers recognizing lines that can be eliminated and by monitoring of phone usage in general.

Various Radio System Initiatives

Although the replacement of the Fire and Sheriff systems is a major project that already has the attention of your Board, there are other significant initiatives in the radio systems area.

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently approved a proposal to resolve radio frequency interference between Nextel Communications and licensees in the Public Safety Service, including the County.

When agreed to by all parties, the reconfiguration will be completed nationwide within 36 months. This will be a complex project and every effort will be made to mitigate any negative impact to County operations. This reconfiguration is similar to a project that occurred in the late 1990's, when the County had to relinquish a portion of its radio spectrum to the Personal Communications Service (PCS). In addition to the relocation, ISD negotiated with the PCS licensees to pay for upgrades and enhancements to the County's communications infrastructure.

The FCC has assured licensees impacted by this ruling that all costs associated with the reconfiguration will be borne by Nextel Communications.

- The Paramedics Radio System used is used by the trauma hospitals to communicate with Fire and other emergency responders. This system is past its useful life. A complete replacement would be an expensive undertaking with no funding available. ISD is evaluating the feasibility of adding the Paramedics Radio System users to the Countywide Integrated Radio System (CWIRS). If feasible, the savings would be significant since only replacement radios would need to be acquired, not the entire infrastructure.

I will be arranging a meeting with your Deputies to discuss these initiatives in more detail in the near future. Should you have any questions, please contact me or Mark Gascoigne of my staff at 562-940-2901.

DL:sg

c: Chief Administrative Officer
Chief Information Officer
ISD Board Deputies